

winning combination of cards for participants to place bets thereon, and in use one or each participant places a bet on one or more of the betting zones and a dealer deals from one or more packs of cards for the player and the dealer in a manner according to card game rules, and wherein all bets are placed before the dealer commences dealing, on completion of a hand participants are paid according to winning bets made and according to the game rules.--

REMARKS

The independent claim 1 is amended herewith in a manner that is believed to sharpen the definition of the invention relative to the applied combination of references.

Reconsideration is accordingly respectfully requested for the rejection of claims 1-14 under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly being obvious based on the combined teachings of SCHORR et al. 5,275,416 in view of newly-cited GRIFFITHS 5,174,579.

Newly-cited GRIFFITHS appears to be teaching away from the game as described in the SCHORR et al. patent, inasmuch as the GRIFFITHS game is played on a conventional Blackjack game table, whereas the SCHORR et al. game is played on a modified game table. Therefore, considering the applied references collectively, there appears to be no suggestion to modify the SCHORR et al. game table by adding further betting zones, to place the additional side wagers as taught by GRIFFITHS.

However, even if the SCHORR et al. game were to be modified in view of GRIFFITHS, in the manner proposed in the outstanding Official Action, the invention as now claimed would not result.

In particular, in GRIFFITHS, the side bet is on the occurrence of "21 or over" in the game of Blackjack, i.e., either exactly 21 or any value of a bust hand (22-26 being the possibilities in Blackjack, assuming a player does not hit on 17 or higher, and of course, the house cannot). Therefore, in GRIFFITHS, the side wager is on the occurrence of a card combination having one of six different possible values.

By contrast, claim 1 as amended herewith specifies that the further betting zone(s) is designated for a single-value prenominated paramount winning combination of cards. In the example of the game of Blackjack, this would be Blackjack only, or, alternatively, Blackjack or a combination of three or more cards totaling exactly 21, but no other card value.

Furthermore, in GRIFFITHS, the "21 or over" side wager can be made anytime before the dealer exposes his hole card, and hence would logically more often be made after the initial round of cards is dealt.

By contrast, in the present invention as recited in the amended claim 1, all bets (including any bets in the further betting zone(s)) are placed before the dealer commences dealing,

a further distinction in the present invention in relation to GRIFFITHS.

Therefore, from the above discussion, it is believed to be apparent that (1) a skilled artisan would not have been motivated to modify the game of SCHORR et al. in view of GRIFFITHS, in the manner proposed in the outstanding Official Action; and (2) even if the references were to be combined in that manner, the invention as now claimed would not result.

It is therefore believed that claims 1-14 as amended herewith are free of the prior art of record.

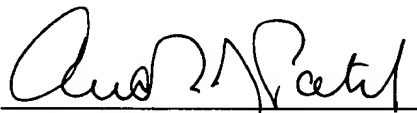
In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, therefore, it is believed that this application has been placed in condition for allowance, with claims 1-14, as amended. Allowance and passage to issue on that basis are accordingly respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version showing the changes made to the claims. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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July 28, 2003

"VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE"

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

--1. (thrice amended) A method of playing a card game for a dealer and at least one imaginary or real player receiving cards from the dealer on a playing surface, the playing surface having at least two sides, one or more designated player betting zones along one side of the surface, where participants can bet on the player winning, one or more designated dealer betting zones along an opposite side of the surface where the participants can bet on the dealer winning, and one or more further betting zones associated with respective player and dealer betting zones, the or each said further betting zones being designated for a single-value prenominated paramount winning combination of cards for participants to place bets thereon, and in use one or each participant places a bet on one or more of the betting zones and a dealer deals from one or more packs of cards for the player and the dealer in a manner according to card game rules, and wherein all bets are placed before the dealer commences dealing, on completion of a hand participants are paid according to winning bets made and according to the game rules.--